



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**Contact: David Marin (Davis) (202) 225-5074  
Katie Elbert (Hoyer) (202) 225-4131  
Bud DeFlaviis (Weldon) (202) 225-2011**

### **Davis, Hoyer, Weldon Announce Retired D.C. Firefighter and Police Annuities Restored**

**Washington, D.C. – House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA), Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) and Rep. Curt Weldon (R-PA) today announced Senate passage of the District of Columbia Military Retirement Equity Act of 2003, bipartisan legislation that will allow current and former District of Columbia Police Officers and Firefighters, U.S. Park Police Officers, and U.S. Secret Service Employees to “buy back” military service time in order to avoid costly reductions in their monthly benefit payments. The House of Representatives passed this bill in October.**

Under current law, retirees in the D.C. Police Officers’ and Firefighters’ Retirement Plan (Plan) may use the time they served in the military as credit toward their retirement. However, retirees who are eligible to receive Social Security benefits may not concurrently receive credit for the time they served in the military. This means that after the retiree reaches age 65, the amount of their annuity is significantly reduced. Like the Federal retirement programs, FERS and CSRS, this bill would allow members and retirees to “buy back” the years of military service to avoid having the reduction in their monthly benefit payment.

“We have an obligation to right this wrong for the benefit of those who have selflessly served to protect our nation’s capital and defend our nation. This is a simple matter of fairness and equity,” Davis said. “With this legislation, we are providing a fair mechanism for active duty officers and retirees to “buy back” their military service time and maintain their planned monthly annuity.”

“Through no fault of their own, hundreds of retirees found themselves in a precarious position of having their annuities slashed and no mechanism available to ‘buy back’ their military time,” said Hoyer. “These are retirees who served our country in the military, and who returned from service to protect our communities as first responders. With passage of this legislation, we are providing a mechanism for active duty members and retirees to plan for and maintain a comfortable retirement.”

“Thanks to a simple legislative oversight, District of Columbia firefighters and police officers, who also served in the U.S. military, faced drastically reduced retirement benefits, or even worse, would have had to pay back benefits because of a government mistake,” Congressman Weldon said. “Fortunately, Congress took swift action to right this wrong for the benefit of those who have unselfishly served to protect our nation’s capital and defend our nation.”

Firefighters and Police officers hired before November 10, 1996 will be able to buy back their service credit at seven percent of their basic pay at the time of their employment. Those hired after November 10 1996 will pay eight percent of their base pay. Members and retirees will have a period of two years to make these payments.

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